

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 DHA-02 SCSE-00 SCA-01 CIAE-00

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(ISO) W

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O R 021935Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4315

INFO USINFO WASHDC

UNCLAS LA PAZ 1605

STATE FOR ARA

E.O. 11652: N/A

FOLLOWING IS TRANSLATION OF A NEWS STORY IN TODAY'S (MARCH 2)

"PRESENCIA" (CONSERVATIVE CATHOLIC, LA PAZ):

STATUS OF NORTH AMERICAN PRISONERS IN BOLIVIA CONCERNS UNITED STATES
(HEADLINE).

THE PROLONGED DETENTION OF NORTH AMERICAN CITIZENS WITHOUT TRIAL IN
BOLIVIA IS ABOUT TO PRECIPITATE A DEBATE IN THE U.S. SENATE ON
HUMAN RIGHTS IN OUR COUNTRY, ACCORDING TO A LENGTHY REPORT BROAD-
CAST LAST NIGHT ON THE NEWS PROGRAM "FACETAS", ON RADIO LA
CRUZ DEL SUR.

"HIGHLY PLACED SOURCES REPORTED THAT SENATORS EDWARD KENNEDY,
DEMOCRAT, AND STROM THURMOND, REPUBLICAN, TWO SENATORS WHO
HAVE DEMONSTRATED THE MOST CONCERN ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS ALL OVER
THE WORLD, HAVE IN THEIR POSSESSION A DOCUMENT ON BOLIVIA,
ACCORDING TO "FACETAS".

THE REPORT CONFIRMED THAT THREE WEEKS AGO MEMBERS OF A NORTH
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AMERICAN COMMISSION WERE IN LA PAZ TO STUDY THE SITUATION OF A
GROUP OF U.S. PRISONERS IN SAN PEDRO PRISON.

THE COMMISSION WAS IN BOLIVIA FOR A WEEK AND CONTACTED HIGHLY
PLACED OFFICIALS OF THE GOVERNMENT, TAKING THE OPPORTUNITY TO
DISCUSS "VARIOUS TOPICS THAT DEALT NOT ONLY WITH THE STATUS OF
HUMAN RIGHTS BUT ALSO BOLIVIAN PLANS FOR 'DEMOCRATIZATION'."

"FACETAS WAS UNABLE TO OBTAIN BACKGROUND INFORMATION, BUT IT IS KNOWN THAT THE COMMISSION FORMALLY PROPOSED APPLICATION OF THE LAW AND ACCELERATION OF PROCEEDINGS AGAINST U.S. CITIZENS.

THE COMMISSION THAT WAS IN LA PAZ MET WITH TWENTY-ONE NORTH AMERICANS, ACCUSED OF POSSESSION AND TRAFFICKING IN NARCOTICS, NOW IN SAN PEDRO AND LEARNED THAT NONE OF THEM HAD ACTUALLY BEEN TRIED. SOME OF THEM HAVE ONLY BEEN GIVEN HEARINGS BUT NOT ONE OF THEM HAS ARRIVED AT THE SENTENCING STAGE.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION INCLUDED LOUIS G. FIELDS, LEGAL AID, SAM MOSCOWITZ, FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, AND GORDON BALDWIN, FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN.

OTHER DELEGATES FROM OTHER INTERESTED GROUPS ARE THOUGHT HAVE COME TO MEET WITH BOLIVIAN AUTHORITIES, BUT THE THREE ABOVE MENTIONED INDIVIDUALS HAD THE MISSION OF ASCERTAINING THE STATUS OF NORTH AMERICAN PRISONERS AND HEARING THEIR COMPLAINTS.

THE REPORT WAS ACCOMPANIED BY INTERVIEWS WITH THE WARDEN OF THE PRISON, COLONEL GUSTAVO ROJAS, WHO CONFIRMED THE PRESENCE OF THE NORTH AMERICAN COMMISSION. HE SAID HE HAD ALLOWED THE COMMISSION TO INTERVIEW THE PRISONERS.

THE PRISON AUTHORITIES DENIED ANY RESPONSIBILITY SINCE THE JURIDICAL PROCESS IS OUTSIDE THEIR DOMAIN, AND ON THE CONTRARY THEY "WERE COMPLIMENTED BY THE COMMISSION FOR THE TREATMENT GIVEN TO THE PRISONERS". ROJAS CONFIRMED ALSO THAT "IT IS EVIDENT
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THAT NONE OF THE TWENTY-ONE HAVE BEEN LEGALLY SENTENCED," A SITUATION WHICH GAVE RISE TO THE COMMISSION'S INTERPRETATION THAT THEIR FELLOW CITIZENS WERE ILLEGALLY DETAINED AND THAT, AS A CONSEQUENCE, BOLIVIA WAS INFRINGING ON THE NORMS OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

THE MAJORITY OF THE PRISONERS HAVE BEEN DETAINED FOR APPROXIMATELY TWO YEARS, AND THEIR SITUATION WAS BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF JUDICIAL AUTHORITIES ON THEIR LAST TWO VISITS TO THE PRISON.

THE LIST OF PRISONERS IS AS FOLLOWS: ROBERT BILLOCK JUDGE, WILLIAM BESSELLE, PATRICK DUFFY, RICHARD FARMER, ALLAN FLOYD, DANIEL GOLDMAN, LOUIS HEPBURN, CHARLES KLOHN, ALEXANDER LA CROIX, MARTIN LOGAN, CECIL MCDONALD, THOMAS MCGINNES, PAUL MAIORINO, JOHNSTONE NEWMAN, ALLEN PAULSEN, FRANK SANDERS, WILLIAM SEX TON, DANIEL SULLIVAN, AND ROY WARD.

NORTH AMERICANS ACCOUNT FOR TWENTY-ONE OF THE FIFTY-ONE FOREIGNERS

IMPRISONED IN SAN PEDRO, WHERE THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PRISONERS IS 650. THE NATIONALITIES OF THE OTHER FOREIGNERS ARE: THREE ARGENTINIANS, SEVEN COLOMBIANS, TWO VENEZUELAN, FOUR CHILEANS, ONE ENGLISHMAN, THREE CANADIANS, ONE URUGUAYAN, ONE AUSTRALIAN, AND ONE AUSTRIAN. ALL WERE ARRESTED FOR POSSESSION OF OR TRAFFICKING IN NARCOTICS.

ACCORDING TO THE REPORT, NOW BEING CONSIDERED AT THE KENNEDY-THURMOND LEVEL, IN BOLIVIA THERE ARE ALSO NORTH AMERICAN WOMEN PRISONERS AND THEIR SITUATION IS MORE SERIOUS.

THE WOMEN'S PRISON IN OBRAJES HAS PROVIDED NO INFORMATION CONCERNING THEM. "THREE OF THE PRISONERS WERE INTERVIEWED IN SAN PEDRO. THE MAJORITY COMPLAINED OF THE DELAY IN JUSTICE AND EVEN OF POOR CARE. THEY SAID THAT OFTEN THEY ARE ILL AND UNCLASSIFIED

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DO NOT RECEIVE ADEQUATE ATTENTION. THE WARDEN SAID, NEVERTHELESS, THAT SUCH WAS NOT THE CASE AND THAT U.S. CONSUL EDWARD MILBURN OR VICE CONSUL BOB BLOHM VISIT THE PRISONERS REGULARLY AND PROVIDE MEDICAL CARE.

ONE OF THOSE COMPLAINING MOST IS DANIEL GOLDMAN, WHO CONSIDERS HIS DRUG ADDICTION TO BE A CASE FOR A PSYCHIATRIST.

THE NORTH AMERICAN (GOLDMAN) STATES THAT ONE OF HIS RELATIVES HAS JUST DIED LEAVING HIM WITH AN INHERITANCE OF SIX MILLION DOLLARS. "I AM WILLING TO SPEND THAT MONEY TO OBTAIN JUSTICE" HE SAID.

THE NORTH AMERICANS STATES INCIDENTALLY THAT, "THEY WOULD PREFER TO BE PRISONERS IN THE UNITED STATES, EVEN THOUGH WE DOUBT THAT WOULD COME ABOUT, BECAUSE THE LEGAL PROCESS MOVES MORE RAPIDLY THERE."

ALL THE PRISONERS ARE HOUSED IN THE "ALAMOS" SECTION OF SAN PEDRO AND ENJOY GREATER FREEDOMS THAN OTHER PRISONERS.

ACCORDING TO ROJAS, THE PREVENTIVE DETENTION OF DRUG ADDICTS IN SAN PEDRO IS GIVING RISE TO SERIOUS DRUG TRAFFIC PROBLEMS. HE STATED THAT HE HAD DISCOVERED THAT A BOLIVIAN PRISONER BECAME A TRAFFICKER IN THE PRISON. HE WAS REFERRING TO ONE JAIME JIMENEZ, WHO TOOK ADVANTAGE OF CONTACTS OUTSIDE OF THE PRISON TO ACQUIRE COCAINE SULFATE WHICH HE THEN SOLD TO THE NORTH AMERICANS. ON BEING DISCOVERED, A PLASTIC BAG CONTAINING SULFATE AND 2,375 PESOS (ABOUT 118 DOLLARS) WERE TAKEN FROM HIM.

THE WARDEN STRESSED THAT THIS SITUATION SHOULD BE RESOLVED AS SOON

AS POSSIBLE IN ORDER TO AVOID GREATER PROBLEMS. ENDIT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Disposition History: n/a
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Disposition Remarks:
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Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Expiration:
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From: LA PAZ
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Office: ACTION ARA
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Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Review Media Identifier:
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Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
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Type: TE
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Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009